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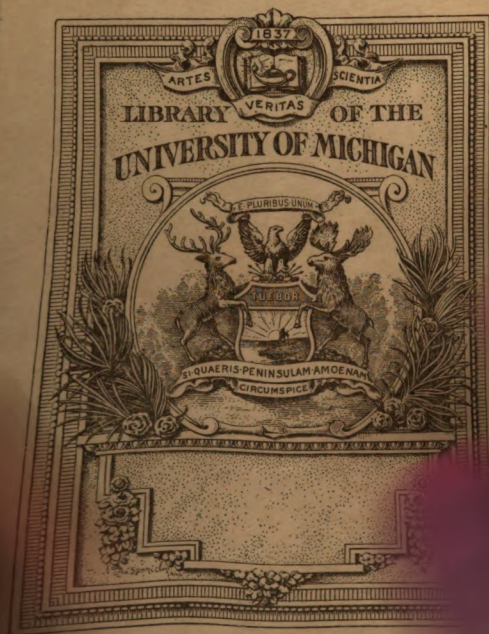
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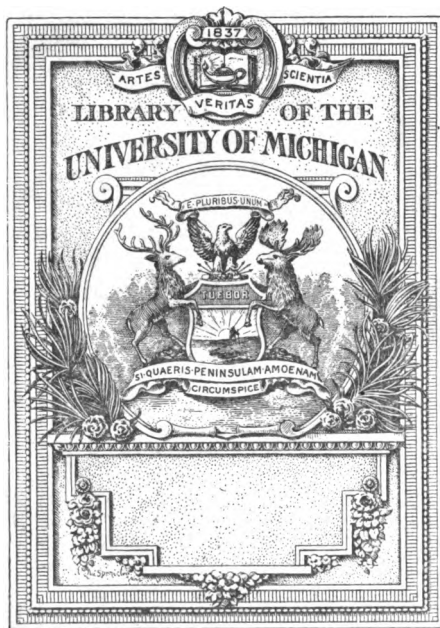
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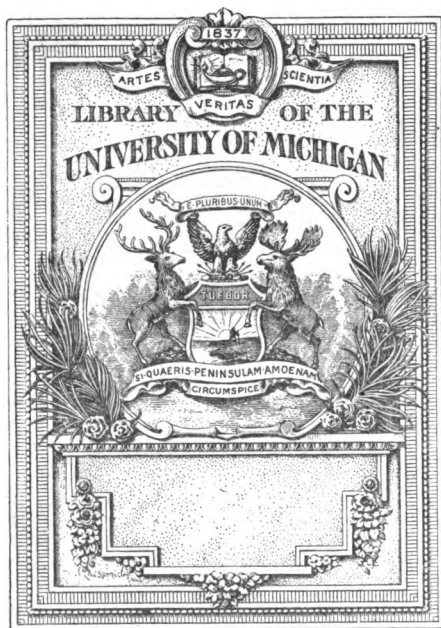
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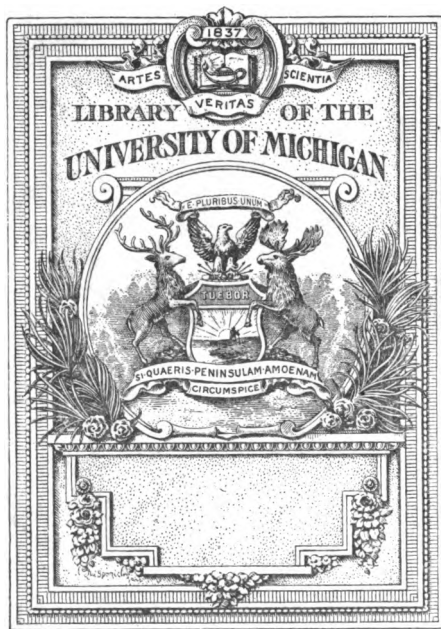
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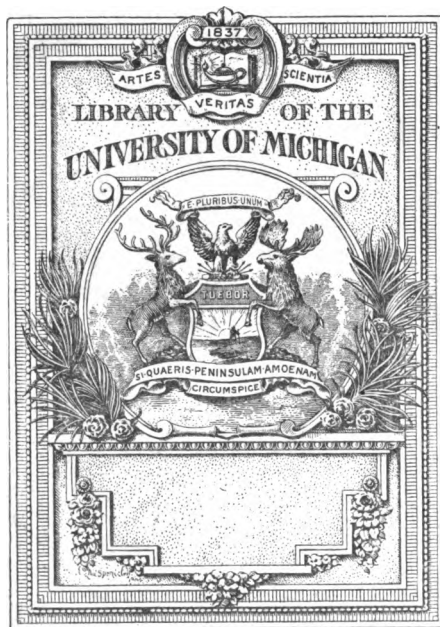
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THE
OLD FARM HOME

A Shadow of a Poem

BY
ABBIE M. GANNETT



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*THEIR LIVES the Poem were ; the faltering line
Mere shadow of a substance quite divine.*

*THE farm homes to New England dear !
Unchanged they stood for many a year,
While generations came and went,
With their plain homeliness content ;
Nurse of the virtues large and strong,
Honor and praise to them belong.
Pretentious, modern Art assails, —
Would sweep them from our native vales, —
But never can our people claim
A phase so simple-sweet for them ;
One lingering look we backward cast
Before they fade into the Past.*

THE OLD FARM HOME.

A SHADOW OF A POEM.

I.

THE BIRTHPLACE.

A BIT of choice New England green
Bosomed the rocky hills between ;
The farm-house rafters long were laid
Ere skilful workmen plied their trade ;
Great beams upheld the unplastered wall ;
The kitchen chimney, huge and tall,
Disclosed the yawning fireplace where
The oak logs burned with ruddy glare ;
The andirons stood for use, not show ;
Above the dresser's polished row
Of tins, the sweet corn braided strong,
Apples in many a festoon long
Drying, with herbs — a savory throng,
Told of the owner's fruitful farm.

How smooth and white the sanded floor,
Hospitable the low, wide door
That opens on no solemn hall
Where form and state hold each in thrall,
But straight into the heart of home,
A mother's smile for all who come,
A father's hand with welcome warm !

The best room was the mother's pride,
Though little grace was here descried :
A yellow-painted floor, a mat
Made of the odds and ends of clothes
That long had service ceased for those
Who wore their garb, unmade for show,
While patch could hold or patience sew ;
They prized it none the less for that.
The wainscot held some portraits rare,
Faces of ladies young and fair
(Though I confess the fashion-plate
Has better art at present date),
Save one, a ship on a stormy sea ;
This had so potent power o'er me
That when, a child, the infrequent boon
In the best room to play alone,

Was granted me, no straight-backed chair
Was a more moveless object there
Than I, who, mute, with folded hands,
Sailed in a dream to other lands,
In the great ship where now the gale
Threatens grim death to all who sail;
Or now, perchance, 'tis bearing me
Some splendid, mystic argosy,
Till lowers the wild storm's angry frown,
And in the waste the ship goes down.
I cry, and wring my hands in grief:
Fond mother hastens for relief;
"What have you done? That ship again!
Foolish to leave you here, 'tis plain,
You shall not come another day
And fright me; there! go, child, and play."

The window's narrow, diamond lights
Looked on the pleasantest of sights,
Unless the housewife's prideful care
Had lowered the curtains hanging there,
When from her cleansing Monday's wash
She viewed her dimity starched and fresh —
Green meadows where the slanting sun



Casts shadows long when day is done,
The cleft hill where the sunset glows
And o'er the heaven its splendor throws,
Touching the soul with feeling strong,
That at the last finds speech in song :

SUNSET.

Oh ! the gold and the glow, the glow and the
gold,
Beautiful vision that never is old,
Thrilling the heart with a rapture divine
Long, long after the sun's decline.

The sun of our life may sink to rest,
And the joys depart that once have blessed,
But the glow and the gold, the gold and the
glow,
Of memory last forever, we know !

W. H. U.

II.

THE FAMILY.

THE farmer was an anxious man,
Forever brooding o'er some plan
To make the homestead fields increase
Their profits small, that more of ease
To those he loved would be insured.
Through scores of years what toil endured
This plodding tiller of the earth!
And still he had a share of peace,
When, labor o'er, the evening breeze
Bore to him scents of field and vine,
And soothed him the home-shadowing pine;
Or when, on winter nights, he sat
Beside the sheltering kitchen hearth,
Listening his dear one's household chat.

On russet stem the wilding rose,
Thus at her husband's side she glows
In memory that makes all things sweet, —

The dear home mother! All unmeet
Seem any words thy praise to speak;
Not thine the worn and pallid cheek
Too often our New England wives
Wear — saddest sign of saddest lives —
Lives over-full of petty cares,
That steal the richness and the worth
Of the great mission they fulfil;
For she who children bears and rears,
Like to the generous, fruitful earth,
In the deep valleys bright and still
Should be, not as the barren hill
Despoiled of bloom, by storms swept bare.
Slender was she, and delicate
She seemed; and yet a bounteous fate
Had blessed her with a native strength
That gave through years a joyance rare;
And her kind husband strove alway
To keep all slavish toil at bay
From her, though him it held in thrall.
The good recoiled on him at length.
Dear heart! how scarcely more than girl
She looked amidst her children tall;
And I, the slightest one of all.

Was nearest her, because she oft
Joined in my play with equal glee,
Or to her bosom folded me
For hours, twining my hair to curl,
Till sleep descended tranquilly.
And when was heard the summons soft,
And our beloved was borne away,
My sisters heard our father say,
"I sheltered her as I have you,
'Tis all that comforts me this day."
Oh, comfort dear, to heart so true!

And later, when that heart of love,
With earnest, manly patience, strove
The meaning of his grief to prove,
The blessed, hidden good he saw,
Revealed the universal law:

IN SORROW.

"Strength in adversity."
Recall the thought, I pray;
The sunshine wakes the plant to life,
And tints its petals gay.

"Strength in adversity."

Harshly your accents sound ;
Glad love will deepen character,
And make its worth profound.

"Strength in adversity."

Nay, voice, I heed thee not ;
I see the upbuilding power of joy,
Be happiness my lot.

Again that hard refrain ?

Perverse art thou, my friend ;
I know the seed must buried lie
To work its purposed end ;

Must feel the weight of earth,
Must lack the heavenly light,
And in the gloom, intense, alone,
Yearn upward in its might.

But shall the human heart,
Like the imprisoned seed,
Find its enduring strength alone,
In hours of sorest need ;

Where it must feel the gloom,
The weight of loss and pain,
Until is born the strength divine,
Never to die again?

“This human heart transcends
All other forms of life ;
Shall its experience be less dear,
Less stern its upward strife?

“Nay, type of all that is,
No deeps unplumbed shall be,
Piercing the void, yet will it gain
Strength in adversity.”

Voice of my soul, I hear,
Your wisdom calm I see ;
Dark is the night, yet will I say,
Strength in adversity!

The home-roof sheltered daughters four :
Gay Jess, and lovely Elinore,
Marion the thoughtful, in whom more
Than the others was the household blessed,

And one more tenderly caressed
Because so slight and shy was she ;
They called the child Anemone ;
Upon the Sacred Book's birth-leaf
She bore a plainer name, and brief.
Oh, memory's tears ! the firm-set years
Glide back and let the picture through —
The long, green meadows wet with dew,
The daisies springing white and new,
The scent of fresh life in the air,
The flying birds adrift in song,
As with glad step she walks along,
The slender maid with wind-swept hair.
Oh, firm-set years, delay your haste
To shut the picture from my view ;
The woman though with sorrows few
That deeply press, or cares that waste,
May well desire to hold anew
The scene beloved, to her so fair,
The dear, home meadows wet with dew,
The slender maid with wind-swept hair !

Wise, elder sister, but for you,
When the loved mother's hands were stilled,

That form a little grave had filled ;
But the dear trust you took, and through
The girlhood's years precarious, kept
A vigilance that never slept ;
So sheltered was the Wind-flower frail,
She lives to write their simple tale.

There was one brother ; his active mind
Small joy in his toil's routine could find,
But the pressing needs of the father's farm
Called for the strength of his brave, young arm.
He did his duty with quiet grace,
But the thoughtful lines of his youthful face
Told of the interests far apart,
His hand was engrossed, but not his heart.
He longed to share the company
Of each shy bird and exploring bee ;
The wood-spider's habits he knew full well,
Was learned in the mystery of the cell
That builds the monad, and centuried tree,
For a true boy naturalist was he.
What wonders of life our attic knew !
Things that crawled, and swam, and glided,
and flew,

For which none had ever a name but Will;
So tender to sisters, yet ready to kill
The tiniest insect that hovered anear,
Or the songster sweet in the upper air.
In vain for our favorites we plead;
"The man of science has only a head,
And never a heart," our brother said.
But none the less his playful word
Our pity made for bee and bird —
We saw not the indicated power
Late years would open into flower.

His nature had another side,
In that we felt an ardent pride.
He dearly loved the beautiful lays
The poets have left to gladden the days;
He conned them joyously and well;
They bound his fancy with their spell.
We minded how at his daily work
He was far too honorable to shirk
As many a boy of his brain would have done,
The tones of his earnest voice were heard
Repeating some grand, old poem that stirred
Our souls as his, and we knew that he

Was not at the task where he seemed to be—
The grand, old poet and boy were one!

This is the old-time family
That met beneath the dear roof-tree.

There had been another, but she died young;
She was the first of the mother's brood;
Her loss made a long home-solitude,
Though baby-smiles tried to make it good,
And of her the apple-tree has sung:

THE SONG OF THE APPLE-TREE.

Rough grows my trunk, crooked my boughs,
And my fruit is none too fair;
But the bloom of my flowers in the spring-time,
Can with any bloom compare;

Pure white, with pink deep-tinted;
And the odors that I send
On the soft, sweet summer air abroad,
Might with choicest perfumes blend.

Dearly she loved my blossoms,
And each May morning fair,
She would break a spray all dewy-wet,
To adorn her shining hair.

Or, perchance, unopened, some tender bud
Upon her breast would cling,
Like her own modest loveliness,
Type of the maiden spring.

But, alas! her life was fragile
As the petals of my flowers;
And day by day she weaker grew
Through the long summer hours;

And when the Autumn's wind and rain
Tossed my branches to and fro,
With many a sob and many a tear
They laid our darling low.

But she wished to sleep beneath my shade,
The beautiful and the fair;
And as the seasons come and go,
She lieth in my care.

I know she feeleth, knoweth,
That I bloom for her alone,
The leaves that drop upon her grave,
Are my tears a-falling down.



III.

EARLY DAYS.

How happily was childhood passed,—
Those years that never fled too fast!
The summer day, ere it was done,
Caught every joy beneath the sun.
From dawn's first flush, to first faint star,
She was free to wander wheresoe'er
She pleased, and fearlessly she strayed
In the great, glad world for childhood made.
Was not each beauty spread for her
Of nature's grand phenomena?
Wonders that puzzled the sages great
Were the little child's entire estate.
Powers that meet, and mix, and bring
Marvels, man's blessings to fulfil,
They questioned, and we do so still;
She took possession unquestioning;
Hence rose her exuberance free and wild,
Who does not envy the little child?

The great sun came in splendor bright, —
For her alone the peerless sight;
The immeasurable azure of heaven would smile
Her slightest sorrow to beguile;
Afar in the west the mists wove shrouds
And rigging thin of thunder-clouds,
Till darkly gathering, the storm
Crashed sonorous music through the dome,
That she might thrill with awed delight
Born of wild sound and wilder sight;
The flowers were made for her pleasure and use,
They blessed her free breaking by blossoms
 profuse;
The small folk that peopled the woodland and
 field,
For her a still greater enjoyment would yield;
The brown cricket scanned her with glistening
 eyes,
They counselled apart and together grew wise;
The chipmonk delayed his affairs of haste,
In her company finding a moment to waste;
The grasshopper paused for a space, then his
 jump
Squarely landed him on her arm rosy and plump;

Imprisoned within her velvety palm,
He found himself tenderly shielded from harm.
The birds twittered to her from moss-broid-
ered wall,
From their elm-swinging nest shrilled the ori-
oles' call;
When their fledglings peeped forth in coats of
bright flame,
She had welcome for each and a long-pondered
name ;
She knew the cows loved her, it was her delight,
Ere twilight had builded her solemn-hued fane,
And the midsummer calm lay in roseate light,
To join their slow march in the wood-scented
lane.

But the slowly-revolving seasons at last
Cried, Lo! the glad day of thy childhood has
passed.

IV.

YOUTH AND LONGING.

WHERE thicket and pasture meet, and the wall,
Lichened and mossy, slopes down to the spring,
Where year after year the autumn leaves fall,
And earth has dark mould for covering,
The wind-flower uncloses her soft pink hood,
She looks on the world of beauty before her,
Its thousand songs, and its thousand blooms,
With longing her inmost being stir;
A part is she of this wonderful good,
And with rapture her spirit invokes the power
Bringing sunlight and melody, color, perfumes,
To gladden and quicken her life of an hour!

The maiden like her namesake sweet,
Is moved by an impulse strong;
She would mould her thoughts into measures
meet,
And she calls on the Muse, whose numbers beat
In time to the woodland echoes fleet,

And all glad sounds that spring-tide greet,
Thalia, the goddess, whose rhythmic feet
Weave rural life into song.

INVOCATION.

O lovely Spirit of Poesy,
Inflame our hearts to-day,
Let them beat with the hope and gladness
Rife in the fields of May!

Here Nature is keeping jubilee,
She has flung her garlands wide
O'er bush and tree, o'er vale and hill,
Lavish as summer-tide.

The daisy lifts her wondering eyes,
Dandelions laugh on the lea,
The burnished buttercups gleam out
From a wealth of greenery.

The hills are o'errun with violets,
They've forgotten to be shy;
So warm with life are they, they draw
The azure from the sky.

And down beside the dimpling brook,
Their sisters slim and white,
Set in their dainty beds of moss,
Lean forth to greet the light.

The blue-eyed grass-flower's modest gaze
The sudden light has caught,
That leaps to life in the infant's smile,
Of heavenly radiance fraught.

Above gray trunk and gnarled limb,
Are sprays of bloom so fair,
We think of spirits wafting them
Down from some purer air;

The home-blooms of the apple-tree!
They are but these, we know;
Yet each May makes no less divine
The rose-blush on the snow.

Sweeter the air than airs of heaven, —
These winds with fragrance sown;
Contribute to each breath we draw,
Thousands of flowers new-blown.

Color and form, and scent and sound,
Are in such harmony,
Whispers Delight to every sense,
"Is it not joy to be?"

O lovely Spirit of Poesy,
Inflame our hearts to-day,
Let them beat with the hope and gladness
Rife in the fields of May!

THE RESPONSE.

Eager, longing heart that yet would quench its
longing,
In the happiness of Nature, her life of bloom
and song,
Dreaming, restless soul that thus itself is wrong-
ing,
As forgetfulness it seeketh in delights that
myriad throng;

Think'st thou I will aid thee to attain the glad-
ness,
Royal boon of every flower waving in the
breeze?

Never may my promptings hint of wrong or
sadness?

— Lilies of the field, thy mind arrayed like
these?

Ah! not in olden time did the Muse, descending,
Winning sweet contentment for lowly mortal,
sing;

But desire of glory, action, fame unending,
Filled his breast whenever she touched the
silver string.

As he, upward striving, through each generation,
Nobly toiled to fashion his sublime ideal,
Did she ever gladly at his invocation,
Stoop to lift his spirit, fettered by the real.

Now that near his present lies the consumma-
tion —

The Great and Good already hover near as
earthly guests,
Shall he court inaction, and stifle aspiration,
Plead with me for other than loftiest behests?

Vainly, ah! too vainly, are his wishes given,
From the Fields Elysian, earthward have I
come;
There is all perfection, joy of who have striven,
In each soul immortal grandeur hath its
home.

Can I view the contrast to man's habitation?
Crown his imperfections with soothing sense
of rest?
Let the partial good of fleeting inspiration,
Meet the sure reward of those who do the
best?

Deep within my heart lies pity for the weary,
All suffering and sin, all ignorance and wrong,
That still hold their sway in myriad places
dreary,
And deep strains pathetic sweep my chords
along.

To the selfish spirit but for gladness seeking,
To the yearning heart that would cast aside its
care,

I would lift the vision in behalf of sorrow speaking,
E'en from Nature's guerdon draw him, so marvellously fair.

I would win man's pity for the one despairing,
Lead to lonely places where skulking crime has fled,
Up the stairway sickening, where disease has come unsparing,
And Sin and sweet Child-innocence, side by side are laid.

Moved by my sad music and this desolation,
His heart overflowing in pity for his kind,
The ignorant and wretched, all needing consolation,
Who a dreary bondage this earthly kingdom find,

He casts aside the dream that in his heart was reigning,
He will gird to action and spare himself no pain,

Then renewed will be his brother, his dreary lot
attaining,

Possessions sweet and noble those earnest
strivings gain.

And, lo! the advancing future still greater good
revealing,

His heart with joy is swelling, his lips break
out in song,

And he blesses with a blessing from the thank-
ful deeps of feeling,

The Muse who yet his gladness and peace de-
layed not long.

When Duty whispers, the desire
Fostered most dearly should expire,
And we obey, lo! not a grave
Is there, we see bright bowers wave,
Hope's face peers out their sprays among,
Life, love, not death, to us belong!

She who would live for other's good,
Lost not the voices of her soul,

She found them clearer, in control
Of all her being; when the mood
Of nature her own mood would share,
Heart thrilled to song as bud to rose,
Or spring, fast following winter's close,—
Ah, Spring! your earliest touch she felt,
As grass-blades where the snow-drifts melt,
When warm south winds deliverance bear.

VOICE OF THE SPRING.

There's a joy that is waiting for thee,
There's a hope, though thy bosom is sad;
Oh list, then, oh list, to its sweet, thrilling tones,
Let thy spirit believe and be glad.

Wildly bloweth the winter-cold wind,
Bare and black are the boughs of the tree,
And icily stretcheth the river away
To a songless and desolate lea.

But a spirit's at work 'neath the sod,
A spirit of beauty and power,



Hand in hand with the sunshine and quickening
rain,

It shall rise into leafage and flower.

And the joy that is waiting for thee,

Is the joy of this new, happy birth,

Past the winter of doubt and the chill of des-
pair,

Shall thy heart be renewed as the earth.

And the melody heard in the wood,

And where the stream laughs to the sea,

And that fervently quickens thy pulses anew,

Is the song of the spirit set free!

When Summer basked in tropic heat,

And once green fields were bare and brown,

Nor longer laughed the mountain rill

From silvery ledges tumbling down,—

Nature's monotonous voices still—

And toilers moved with tardy feet,

Still bloomed amid those drowsy days,

For her the wonder of her lays.

M. G. U.

SUNFLOWERS.

In August's burning heat
The parchèd cornfields stand
As drought reigns in the land.
Crickets their notes repeat,

Unceasingly and harsh ;
On sere grass of the close,
The cattle, restless, doze,
Or wander in the marsh,

Where, clipped, and coarse, and green,
Salt herbage that the tide
Late-flooded — but now dried —
Is all the verdure seen.

The vines upon the wall
Had tender leaflets fair,
Gross spiders' webs are there,
And noisome things that crawl.

The hidden birds are still ;
 Waysides with dust are white,
 That lately blossomed bright,
And vanished is the rill.

The earth, as no rains fall,
 Like one who mourns the dead
 With ashes on his head,
Stands dreary, hopeless all.

The promise of the east,
 The golden light, has fled,
 The heavens are as lead,
Dim is the glowing west.

What glory meets the eye?
 All through the sultry hours
 Shed bounteous sunflowers
Lost splendors of the sky !

A little life to one so near
She asked no other blessing here,
A little life the maiden loved
And by a tender service proved

The mother and the child how dear,—
Withdrawn that life as one may sigh
And see the chance of Heaven go by!

In days when falls the yellow leaf,
And time drear sorrow chastened hath,
She set her grief in tender line,—
O Friend, such grief hast thou and thine.

THE FERNS.

I gathered them one autumn day
Along the margin of the brook,
The fine, green ferns that as in play
With the light breeze, their long plumes shook.

How green was all the meadow-way,
How blue the sky that o'er it bent,
The wild-bird's twitter, near and gay,
How full my heart with sweet content!

For at my side the tiny child,
In baby-coach, all gayly clad,

Wide-eyed, looked wondering out, then smiled
As if the bright scene made him glad.

And as the fragrant stems I broke,
And tossed them o'er his small, soft hands,
His laugh ran rippling like the note
Of the sweet water on the sands.

On mossy rock my volume old
I laid, and placed the leaves with care;
When all the world without was cold
And drear, and all the fields were bare,

Or covered thick with winter's snow,
And leafless trees sighed in the wind,
My firelit room this touch should know
Of the fair summer left behind.

But now the winter days are spent,
The bluebird trills the song of spring,
And still the ferns, for bright cheer meant,
Unto the book's moist leaves yet cling.

Yes, the closed leaves their forms conceal;
Years hence, perchance, to other eyes

Than mine, they may, yet green, reveal
Their fragrant breath and sweet surprise.

O work that did my hands employ,
O ferns from the remembered spot,
Grief have you brought to me for joy,
You still are here, but he is not!

The season blessed of God and man,
Of Him, through that great gift, the Son,
Of man, because with loving deed
He cheers a brother in his need;
The spirit of this sacred time
Draws upward thought to heights sublime.

CHRISTMAS.

How bright the hearth-fires shine!
The household faces glow,
As beats each heart below
To one high thought divine.

Without the drifted sleet,
Old Winter's icy rime,

But in the air the chime
Of bells resounding sweet.

Short are the days and dark ;
Dark are the nights and long ;
But to the world's glad song
The gloomy spaces hark ;

The tempest holds its breath ;
Yes ! as the pæans rise
And tremble in the skies,
Even here joy conquereth.

O sweetness, wrung from strife !
O gladness, born of pain !
His loss our endless gain,
His death our very life.

Strange law, that doth declare
Self-sacrifice to be
Like an uprising tree
Whose fruit the nations share.

Abides a wider law ?
Shall he who, suffering, dies

For man's sake, yet arise
To life without a flaw ?

Ah, this no vain surmise —
Christ at the Father's hand,
This consummation grand
Solves all life's mysteries.

Then ring, O Christmas bells !
And shine, O household fires !
Through you the world aspires,
And man's high fate foretells !

V.

BELLE.

ONE summer when the times were hard,
Came to our simple home to board,
Two city ladies fine and proud.
Our father thought their liberal purse
His wallet thin would reimburse;
For when financial panics come
What suffers more than country home?
The corn-flowers hold as generous boon,
Whose yellow pollen, falling, soon
Builds kernels sweet through ripening June;
With spears innumerable the wheat
Guards its green ranks through July's heat;
Of amber grain there is no lack,
Heaped for the mill in rotund sack
When Autumn drives her coursers back
Spent with long race o'er the burning track;
The orchards store in tempting reach

Nectar in apple, plum, and peach ;
While 'gainst dark loam the tender green
Of lettuce, celery, is seen,
With many a root and herb that make
A tempting show in Autumn's wake ;
But, with his fast-increasing stores,
His loss the husbandman deplores ;
Much of his garnered industry
To dollars turned he may not see.

The mother puts, with patient sigh,
Her thought of some new treasure by,
Chintz for the spare room, or, perchance,
The china, or new spoons, that glance
Imaginative saw, the charm
Of family board, where small display —
Though heaped with produce of the farm
In generous abundance — showed
To longing housewife day by day.

The daughter's wish must be forgot,
Her breast up-bears a heavier load,
On Sunday, when churchward she rode
And passed her lover on the way,

She lacked, alas! the added grace
Of rose-wreathed hat and daintier dress,
Would she might know he missed them not!

Awhile our city guests we feared;
The home, to all of us endeared,
Would common seem whene'er their eyes
Glanced round as in amused surprise.
But soon the eyebrow's lifted arch,
The parted lip, the dainty touch,
Awoke our mirth, and, when apart,
We merrily laughed and took fresh heart.
Our younger guest we might have loved
Save that her aunt's surveillance proved
A constant check upon her mood —
Convention's paths not walked within,
Was her unpardonable sin;
It mattered not that nature wooed
Forth to a joyous solitude,
Culture, in depths of woodland shade,
Should still enfold the city maid;
La grande dame little thought that we
Perceived the incongruity,
And merrily argued that the trees

Ought not to listen to the breeze
Disporting boughs so carelessly,
But stand in prim propriety
Just as her ladyship would see.
Sweet Belle, the niece, most duteous was;
Laughter repressed, with softened voice,
And gown fashion's last whim approved,
An elegant machine, she moved.

One day our elder guest fell ill,
And then it proved, the regal will
That made each friend before her bow,
A king no more, was subject now.
And, thus delivered of her sway,
Our stylish Belle seemed gone away,
And in her stead the dearest girl
Set all our fancies in a whirl
Of pure delight; she danced, she sang,
Her voice to happy laughter rang
As naturally as mountain burn;
Of country sports she took her fill,
Until declared our brother Will
No king restored enjoyed his own
As Belle her realm, now real grown.

A "real" maiden ; real the spell
Beneath whose power our brother fell ;
We saw, and, moved by secret fear,
Foreboded sorrow drawing near
For him to all our hearts so dear.
Yet marvelled we when once again
The aunt assumed her wonted reign,
How Will a manlier attitude
Maintained toward both ; no courtier stood
In presence of his august queen
With finer grace of speech or mien.
The aunt saw with unfeigned surprise,
This youthful dignity arise —
Yet she was ever worldly-wise ;
To the last hour of their sojourn,
Belle had no moment of her own.

Months after sisters would recall
The almost tearful accents fall,
As, with our fine guests, one good-by
Was uttered with down-drooping eye.
And Will ? In him no change we saw
Whose duty was his highest law.
Yet, had we read his heart aright,

This had we found : If out of sight
And in her grander sphere, she keep
Her preference, well ; Love will not sleep.

Preference was love ; the coming years
Saw naught to realize our fears ;
They saw our elder guest rejoice
O'er Belle's first and her later choice ;
The country youth had few compeers.

True is it that our modern eyes
See the Prince wandering in disguise,
Fond hearts each other may not miss,
On Beauty's cheek is still the kiss ;
So must it be while keeps the earth
Her ceaseless change of death and birth.

'TIS LOVE THAT MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND.

When love had kissed fair Beauty's cheek,
And Beauty, waking in surprise,
Turned not away her glances meek
From the full splendor of his eyes,

Then heart to heart and lip to lip
Awoke that passion pure and bright,
To make the days like moments slip,
To banish all the shades of night.

And was this all? O Love, Love, Love,
The world was dead until you came,
Dead, cold, inert, below, above,
Till kindled by your generous flame;
You made the very mould to speak,
With tender leaf and flower to thrill,
When kisses soft met Beauty's cheek,
With frolic life teemed vale and hill —
And man? That dull, insensate clod,
Like one in fetters firmly bound,
Now walks in spirit like a god,
'Tis Love that makes the world go round!

VI.

DRIFTED.

BETTER the words and works of love
For those who need our sympathy,
Than a life of dreams to fruitless prove,
However high-poised they may be.

Whither the beckoning finger led,
Away from the bonds of love and care,
The maiden turned; as the quick years sped,
What would they bring to the dear ones there?

These passing years would bring to Jess
Rarest of woman's happiness,—
The love of an honest, earnest man,
Whose scheme of life lay but in this,
Her peace, and for others helpfulness;
Purely and calm their life-stream ran.

PURPLE CLEMATIS.

Her paling, rich in many a vine —
The honeysuckle's tender green,
And cream-white, fragrant blooms — I ween
They hold all scents as in a mine ;

Ivies, whose glossy tendrils turn
Proudly their low support to use,
The tremulous convolvulus,
Lifting its purple chaliced urn

When the fresh airs of morning blow,
Yet shrinking from the sun's broad light ;
Nasturtiums, flecked with orange, bright
As cloudless sunset's afterglow, —

The farm-house with its windows low,
And low-hung porch, where mantling cling,
Vines rarer — gorgeous censers swing
The trumpet-creepers ; clouds of snow

The fair cucumis throws, while there
Wistarias deck the happy Junes;
Oh, rarely pass the days when noons
Are hottest, and each scene so fair.

Hither I wandered week by week,
To see the face of her I love,
Such longing did my passion prove,
And yet, alas! I could not speak.

My trembling hope required a sign
That in her heart love held a place,
Yet brightly glowed her tender face
For each friend's welcome as for mine.

One morn when all the summer land
Was bathed in dew, and ere the sun
His long, hot journey had begun,
I sought those bowers by soft breeze fanned;

Untimely hour to watch my friend,
Yet some strange spell would draw me near,
My heart quick beating with the fear
Lest she discover, I offend.

As space by space the walls disclose,
All in amaze I saw a flower
 I ne'er had seen until that hour,
Purple, and regal as the rose ;

As if all tints of earth most fair
 To make it rich and full had blent,—
 All with the dews of morn besprent,
The purple clematis bloomed there.

And as I gazed, thrilled with delight,
 The outer door swung open wide ;
 She started, but she could not hide
That roseate blush from my fond sight ;

And, oh, dear thought ! from seeing me ;
 She turned, half smiling, half in fear ;
 In one swift moment I was near,
My prisoned speech at last set free.

The look I had not seen before
 On her bright face, still trembling there,
 Made my emboldened heart declare
The charm that drew me to her door.

And as full many a burning word
I spoke in earnest of my plea,
She plucked one royal bloom for me;
Thus knew I how my plea was heard.

Sweet hour my happy love that crowned.
And now beneath her window-sill
The purple clematis blooms still,
The flower of love the world around !

The farmer's heart was filled with pride —
His Jess the village doctor's bride,
The hand of Fortune was opened wide!
But she had more generous gifts in store
When she lavished on lovely Elinore
Riches, and honor, and high estate,
A place among the favored and great;
But the wife of the future governor
Of her own proud state, would never be
In the "very best society,"
More of a lady than now was she
In her neat house-dress sweeping the floor,

Kneading the wheaten bread o'er and o'er,
Or tending her roses beside the door;
The true-born lady changes not,
However high or low her lot. •

THE LADY.

You shall know her when you see her,
Silken-robed, or poor her gown,
Be her brow than snow-drop fairer,
Or from wind and sunshine brown.

If her dainty hands are gleaming
With the lustre of gemmed rings,
Or all hard their palms from contact
Of unnumbered household things;

Be her speech the speech of culture,
Or of homely phrases framed,
Her ways ever sweet and graceful,
Or those of fine art unnamed;

In the bloom of her young beauty,
Worn by age or weary care,

She, unquestioned, holds her title,
At all times and everywhere.

Willing footsteps hers, that ever
On unselfish errands go,
Heart in sympathy that beateth
To another's joy or woe.

You shall know her when soft lashes,
Lifting, show the sudden light,
Tender, modest, yet undaunted,
Of an eye that's heavenly bright,

Index of a mind that nobly
Doth on noble things reflect,
And a nature ever guarded
By her own true self-respect.

Sagacious Marion, name the prize
The future sets before thine eyes.
So royally hath thy duty shone
Within thy little realm of home,
And thine is such a grand content,
Can another sphere for thee be meant?

The loving sister, outward-bound,
Shall she not find thee in thy place,
When the years have swung their circles round,
And she looks once more upon thy face?
No. Who to her nearest trust is true,
Losing it, seeks for a purpose new;
And she who is loyal to sister and mother,
Will be loyal to woman the wide world over.
If her clear head and loving heart
Discern and feel a wrong,
No words that bring the pain and smart,
Of the unrighteous throng,
Can win her from her duty,
Or mar her life of beauty;
Who seeth from fair Justice' height,
Denounces Wrong, demands the Right.

THE VOICE OF JUSTICE.

If a spirit pines for freedom, whoso standeth in
the way,
Shall he not be called to answer, some fateful
judgment day?

But men are unbelieving, and the greed of place
and power,
Blinds their souls to graver issues than follies of
the hour.

They hear with scorn or jesting of a judgment's
threatened doom,
"What fool foregoes his pleasures for a wrath
so late to come?"

Every day the sun, untiring, his course begins
again,
Sees God's unswerving judgments fall upon the
sons of men;

Love turned to hatred, children's sins reacting
on their sires,
Who their honor high have bartered for the rash-
ness of desires.

Through the ages still called Christian, woman
holds a lower place,
Unsharing with her brother grand achievements
for the race;

And, sadder still, invaded sees her own most
sacred right
To hold her little children as an honor in His
sight.

She may not call to battle, still she must ever
stand,
Unweaponed, undefended, peace in her out-
stretched hand.

But though her cause is bloodless, let the temper
of her words,
Strike through their mailed perverseness, and
pierce their heart like swords:

“What, close the way of progress? what, bar
the thinking mind,
Of the ‘nobler,’ ‘purer’ portion of thine own
human kind?

Oh, words of keen derision! who trusts not
honor’s grace?
Who trusts not noble natures, where’er may be
their place?

Such flattery of phrases to earnest souls must
be
Less than the dissipating foam upon the cruel
sea.

Strengthen those words by deeds, or own from
whence they spring,
Praise to the slave! what is it but a tyrant's
offering?

Of his destiny most worthy the man is most a
man,
When his attitude is tolerance, and justice is
his plan;

While he who claims a prestige through the
sheer might of force,
Builds for the generations a blighting and a
curse.

O women fortune-favored, and by love placed
so high,
Turn not away indifferent unto your sisters'
cry;

If ye need no law of justice through the honor
of your kin,
Still let your sex's thralldom stir sweet pity's
depths within;

Speak from your happy firesides, with pleading
in your tone,
Till no Christian home or nation sees wrong to
woman done.

Thanks for that noble manliness that dares
assert our right;
Thanks for the banded sisters bearing obloquy
and spite;

For the clarion voice of Justice whose echoing
is heard
Above the din of politics, the pulpit's polished
word,

Thanks for the universal Right that shall at
last prevail,
The equity of God's Kingdom that no man can
assail!

Good, generous brother! the years have brought
To thee a recompense dearly sought.

The work he loved and longed to do
The patient years of manhood through,
With zeal uncurbed, now in his prime,
He gave his energies and time.
No study too severe he found,—
For love with labor kept the round
That unto some were dull routine.
What boon of help has love not been!
He shunned no search, where'er it led,
Yet heart was never ruled by head,
For both, he knew, made up the man,
And both were reckoned in life's plan.
Did science seem at times to teach
Matter is all, and God, man's speech,
When in the past he framed a cause
Because he knew not nature's laws,
Quickly made answer then the soul:
A part thou knowest, not the whole;
And high above the freezing doubt
The sun of faith shone clearly out.

THE BIRTH OF FAITH.

I heard, one happy morn,
The cry of one forlorn,
As in some heavenly music a sudden discord jars;
It made my spirit sad,
And my free thought and glad,
No more could upward soar than bird in prison-bars.

This was the voice I heard
That all my spirit stirred
With fears foreboding, and with depths of pain
profound,
“All men were born to die,
And naught in earth or sky
Affords one proof the grave leads to a world beyond.

“For men have lived in dreams,
And in a hope that seems
Born out of some great longing, extravagant and
wild;

And he who runs may read,
That every human creed
Is based on fables wrought when man was but a
child.

“ We seek to-day a sign
From those far hills divine,
Who have the self-same right to manifest of His,
We judge by law and rule,
Nature in reason’s school,
And only find the one grand knowledge that
she *is*.”

I knew the voice I heard
Spoke an unwholesome word,
And yet spell-bound I listened, and could not
turn my face;
And when its word was done,
I was afright as one
Waking from sleep to find a dreary prison-place.

Adown the sunlit hill
Leaped the bright, laughing rill,
It heard the scoffing voice and sang in plaintive
tone,

The red rose paled in grief,
And the broad lily leaf
Drooped o'er its yellow flower that like a star had
shone.

In sunny pasture lands
The whispering poplar stands,
To-day its echoes, sighing, uttered the note of woe;
Darker within the glade
The pines their shadows laid,
As o'er the new-made grave of Hope and Faith
laid low.

Vibrations in the air
The birds make everywhere
The forest rises, and the hill-tops, sun-kissed,
glow,
With wings that tireless beat,
And notes so liquid sweet,
Electric thrilled no more, so hushed they were
and low,

Along the fresh, clear reach
Of the white-broidered beach,

The shining waves no more returned with warm
 embrace,
The leaden sea was still,
And mists all wan and chill,
Blotted the moveless ships, and left of them no
 trace.

From nature's shrouded brow,
I searched my heart, to know
If aught therein would echo the voice's sad re-
 frain :
The inspiration clear
That men have held so dear,
That have made glad the ages in strife with wrong
 and pain ;

The great, glad words of men
Who have risen above the pain,
And dwell as in the precincts of heaven's own
 blessed shade,
Are these, then, held as naught
For the breadth of one man's thought,
Who only sees the dust out of which the earth
 is made ?

I thought of all the throng
Of martyrs pure and strong,
Who, in the faith divine of Love that for men
died,
Had suffered untold pain
For their unseen brothers' gain,—
That our faith might rest more sure in a dear
Christ crucified;

That every wrong and sin
Is knowing unto Him,
Not a dying swallow cleaves the lucid air in
vain,
No little child's sad cry
Is heard unpityingly,
'Neath the great world He made, His throbbing
heart is lain;

That earth was made for man
Upon a wondrous plan,
That hope and faith, twin gifts, God-given, to
him were sent,
That with these gifts he might

Find solace and delight,
Upon its verdurous breast, so gayly flower-be-
sprent;

That when, as children, we
Look upward reverently,
Filled by a joy serene, we touch His garment's
hem!

But when, as doubters, we
Reason deridingly,
Henceforth we dwell apart, this peace no more
may claim.

Still, as I mused, a sense
Of helplessness intense
O'ercame me; and, trembling, I stretched my
hands and prayed:

"Oh, Thou who know'st my grief,
Draw near to my relief!
Give me surety of Thy Presence, let me not be
dismayed!"

Lo! as I prayed, a light
Ineffable, past sight,

Entered my soul, and filled me with a sense of
peace and rest !

Although no voice I heard,
And no form the silence stirred,
I knew the joy that cometh of communion with
the blest.

And, as the throng that pours
Through the church's open doors,
Listens gladly to the teaching of the Lord's dear,
blessed word,
So my restored soul,
Beyond fear's dread control,
Received the benediction, in thanksgiving, of our
God.

TRANSCENDENCE.

Who with fond hope the spirit trust,
Would still rejoice as earth and skies
Reveal their deeper mysteries
To science, name her fiats just ;

Yet deem not these revealings all,—
This form that meets the outward sight,
These wondrous atoms by whose might
A world is built, a world must fall ;

Or treasured teachings of the past
False by the voice of that stern creed
That life-phenomena but need
Matter, still matter, first and last.

Knowledge of every time and clime
Foreshadowed ever was by Thought ;
And Science' highest truths were taught
Thousands of years before her prime,

In wise philosophies of those
Who saw, yet won no fact to prove ;
For universal truths will move
In great souls and themselves disclose.

The Thought of One who globed a world,
And spheres the diamond drop of dew,
Has pulsed the solemn ages through,—
Truth's outmost banner wide unfurled !

Yes, Thought will far outreach the Fact;
Above the dashing and the foam,
Above the thunder and the gloom,
The rainbow spans the cataract.

Substance of all created things
They formulate with care precise,
This, this eludes their figures nice,
The soul that soars on viewless wings.

This small brain, narrowed by the lives
Of petty men, down whose mean line
It has descended, wills but crime,
Nor worth, nor wisdom in it thrives?

Oh, pause; there is a subtle power,
An influence that even here
May bring to fall the unwonted tear,
Call some sweet virtue into flower;

As patient gardener's loving skill
Works miracles in common weeds;
To thorn the pliant shoot succeeds,
And beauty fair displaces ill.

Deaf, dumb and blind ; what dark law brings
This sad one prisoned in such night ?
But Love and Pity work their might,
And, lo, the glad soul soars and sings.

These highest life in nature know :
The plant, the beast ; aspiring man,
Yearning with hope and love, will plan
The First Great Cause from whence they flow.

To This he cries when sad with fears,
To This he sings when joy is sweet,
To This builds shrines where reverent feet
May linger, sin bedew with tears.

And while flowers wake above the sod,
And stars gleam in the arch of night,
Love mourns her dear ones hid from sight,
There still will be the Thought of God !

In lands afar where thou dost roam,
The sweetest memories of home
Thronging upon thy vision come ;

And storied city, pile and tale,
Before the loved home-pictures pale.

Oft on Imagination's wing
Our spirits to thy side we bring,
Enjoy some hallowed spot of earth
Where once heroic souls had birth,
Live in the thoughts that in thee live,
Repeat the lines that thou dost breathe, —
But now we see the burning sand
Stretching athwart Arabia's land;
Moved by her legends old and vast,
We dwell with thee in her grand past:

THE PROPHET.

Arabia's cloudless heavens span
The long routes of the caravan.

By day the sun-god from his throne,
On the parched desert, dazzling, shone.

By night the sky, vast, solemn, blue,
The stars innumerable pierced through

Some pleasant spots of green and shade
The oases in the sand-reach made,—

As little islets out at sea
Where else a dreary waste would be,

Bloom green before the languid eyes
Of mariner, sick of sea and skies.

Here, long ere noon, the cavalcade
Of men and burdened camels stayed

Their heated march, and quenched their thirst
Where the cool waters sparkling burst, —

For even Araby's hot land
Feels the springs' pulse beneath her sand,

That upward seek the light and air,
And keep the traveller from despair;

As on cheek dark with scar and seam,
We sometimes note the tear-drop's gleam,

That tells of feeling not quite dead,
And sympathy not wholly fled.

Oh, royally the tall palms rise,
Dark green, beneath the dark blue skies,—

The gracious palms, whose willowy plumes
Scarce bend with all their wealth of blooms.

Here, stretched at length, the Arabs lay
The long hours of each sultry day,

Dreaming, perchance, of gainful trade
In goods that, rich, the camels lade :

Balsam and senna, balm of fir,
Millet, and wheat, and gums, and myrrh,

Woods, odorous as the Spice Isles fanned,
Sweet smelling coffee of their land, —

Rare fruit, but dry and scentless till
It feels the rough power of the mill ;

Even as those hearts that hardened be,
Till touched by rude adversity.

No wonder if that blue, far sky,
Drew upward the adoring eye ;

The silver heavens that gleamed by night,
Moved not their spirits to a flight

Beyond the trade, beyond the greed,
Towards Him who is the Light indeed.

Stay ; who is he that leans apart ?
This youth ? What feeling sways his heart ?

His dark face wears the tranced look
Of one who reads a holy book ;

Outstretched his arms, as he were there
Alone, and down the shining air

Floated a voice from some far sphere,
Uncaught by other mortal ear :

“ Arise, and flee to some lone place ;
Thou shalt behold an angel’s face.

“ He bears thee message from the sky
Master of thy land’s destiny !

“ A mighty mission to fulfil
Thou hast ; go, it is Allah’s will.”

The spell is o'er and he doth rest,
One great thought surging in his breast:

"O Sun, within yon burning zone,
Like thee is Allah, one, alone;

"Toward Thee I cannot turn my eye,
No more his awful form descry;

"Yet as I feel thy heat and power,
His spirit moves me hour by hour;

"I will obey this wondrous voice,
'Tis Allah bids, and I rejoice;

"Glorious to heed his high command
For Mahomet and for Mahomet's land!"

VII.

THE NEW WORLD.

THE city walls are close and high
As they would reach the very sky.
Close and high, and grim and strong,
They look on folly and on wrong;
Alas for those whom their embrace
Shuts from the light of nature's face!
For them there is no harder fate,
At birth, life's hope has come too late;
For could there glow one little ray,
Pointing to happier lot, 'twould stray
Into sad hearts, and lead them where
God's world is steeped in sunshine fair.
But where the city walls look down
They blight men with their dreary frown;
Beneath the blight they toil, they live,
As this were all earth had to give.
Earth? Ask them of their mother earth,
Her seasons grand, her year's new birth,

The glories that she bourgeons forth,
They tell you of the brick-walled town !

To do the good that she might do
Where cares are great and pleasures few,
However hard her life should be,
Thither came young Anemone ;
But as one standing in the sun
Suddenly feels the light is gone,
And notes the harbingers of storm
O'erclouding all the landscape warm,
So, passing down the city street
Where ignorance and squalor meet,
She felt upon her soul the gloom ;
“ No love, no joy, no dear hearthstone,
No sweet amenities of home ;
Can there be hope for these ? ” she sighed ;
And then an inward voice replied :

NO SOUL SO POOR.

No soul so poor, that may not yet
Be of that beauteous coronet,
The Maker of life will joyous wear
When earth in heaven shall disappear.

Go! what thou may'st of ill repair;
Love's blessings scattered now and here,
Help in dark wastes of sin to set
Bloom for His beauteous coronet.

No thought the maiden had that here,
Heeding the voice of duty clear,
Fate held for her the happiest lot
Of all her girlhood dreams had wrought.

A LITTLE BIRD WHISPERED.

In the hush ere the morn
Of that Day yet unborn,
When the mild-shining star
Trembling afar
On the borders of night,
Was the last, dying light,—
While slumber deep
Held all life in sleep,
Came a breath, came a sound,
In the stillness profound;

And one soul, only one,
Heard the soft-whispered tone.
Sweet bird, not of earth,
To such joy giving birth,
Journey on! what you told
Makes new the world old.
It thrilled her being
Ecstatically through;
This was the message,
"He loves *you!*"

MY HERO.

Shalt thou not be like my mountain
Enthroned in the midst of the mountains?
These lift their broad peaks to the sun,
But soar they never so grandly,
Them it shall grandly outsoar!
Voices of kindred and peoples,
Voices of animate nature,
Spirits from far-off Elysium,
Heart in my bosom that beateth,
All, all conspire to accord thee
Grandest of all things created,—

In whose radiant smile lies her heaven,
The adoring woman's ideal!

Of lands that bask in fame's rich gleam,
Early had come the lover's dream:

"The world is wide," he said, "the world is wide,
Far from my home the seas shall me divide;
When I have seen the crimson sunset's glow
On the ice mountains and the polar snow,
Have seen the orange and the clustering vine
That spends its purpling grapes in mellow wine,
Roamed from the banian's shade to where the
lime
Droops its winged blossoms o'er the storied
Rhine,
Known the rapt spell of glorious Hellas' clime,
Then, then I'll cross anew the restless main,
Contented seek mine own nor wander forth
again."

And when he spoke of those past years
So strangely rimmed by childhood's fears,

"This was the hope it bore to me,"
Her words were, "My ship's argosy
Was lost not! Who more blessed can be,
Than she, who, when a woman grown,
Finds girlhood's mystic dream her own?"

"Heaven, earth and hell lie in the face
Of him you choose of all the race";
So say you, friend? Yet there are those,
From wedding day until life's close,
Who find earth, hell, asunder riven,
And but to them remains the heaven!

What words the bright, sad spell can show,
Swept round one heart, as these two go
Pilgrim-wise toward the old farm home?
[And never again in the years to come!]

Ah, me! how strange and new the spot
That all the past had quite forgot,—
One trace of the old home lingering not.
Familiar fields to trim lawns turned;

A triumph of pride in costly stone ;
Trees, shrubs, with rare names yet unlearned,
Brought from abroad, — such care he took,
Who changed the unpretending nook
Where their fond, simple lives had grown,
Into this grandeur to be shown !

The thought pressed in with bitter smart,
Of all the world, the old-time home had part
Only within her softened heart.



*THE farm homes to New England dear !
Unchanged they stood for many a year,
While generations came and went,
With their plain homeliness content ;
Nurse of the virtues large and strong,
Honor and praise to them belong.
Pretentious, modern Art assails, —
Would sweep them from our native vales, —
But never can our people claim
A phase so simple-sweet for them ;
One lingering look we backward cast
And let them fade into the Past.*

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